DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 153 408 EC 110 357

AUTHOR Griffin, Diane; Plamcrdcn, Sibyl
TITLE The Rolc of Parents in a Prcgram for the Gifted.
PUB DATE May 7S
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Annual International Convention, The Council for Excepticnal Children (56th, Kansas City, Missouri, May 2-5, 1978, Session W10)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Pcstage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education; *Gifted; *Organizaticnal Develcpment; *Parent Associations; *Parent Role; Parent Schocl Relaticnship
IDENTIFIERS Georgia (Richmond Ccunty)

ABSTRACT

Described are the objectives and activities of a 5-year-old local (Richmond County, Georgia) asscciatien for parents of gifted children. Organization objectives are listed and include presenting parents with information fcr better understanding of gifted students and supporting projects planned by the rescurce teachers for the gifted (such as securing resource people from the community). Specific projects explained include assistance with field trips, resource services, financial support, transpcrtaticn, library materials relating to gifted children, and publication of a newsletter. Appended are the bylaws of the associatien, an annotated list of recommended publications, and an crder form fcr the Parent Information Packet. (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original dccument. *
****

ED153408

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN A PROGRAM FOR THE GIFTED

Diane Griffin
Past President
The Association of the Gifted in Richmond County
212 Avondale Dr.
Augusta, Georgia, 30907

Sibyl Plamondon
Coordinator Gifted Programs
Curriculum Center
1740 Walton Way
Augusta, Georgia 30904

May 3, 1978

EC110357

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN A PROGRAM FOR THE GIFTED

Is an Association for the Gifted really necessary? Do parents really have a role in the education of academically talented students? The answer to both questions, as demonstrated by the experience in Richmond County, Georgia, is an unequivocal YES.

When the program for the gifted (known as the Expansion of Interest Program, EIP) was begun in Richmond County in 1973, the teachers and parents of those students identified as having special academic talents saw the need for a supportive organization and established a parents group (Expansion of Interest Parents Association -- EIPA) for that purpose. In the past five years, the group has grown in size and in activity and is now a vital part of the entire program for the gifted. In May of 1976 the name of the organization was changed from the Expansion of Interest Parents Association to The Association for the Gifted in Richmond County (TAG-RC). There were three reasons for the name change: (1) The new name would be more easily recognized by the general public. The term EIPA was often confusing to people who were not familiar with the program, but the phrase Association for the Gifted is essentially self-explanatory. (2) It broadened the base of support by opening the membership to people in the community who do not have children in the gifted program, but who are interested in programs for the gifted. (3) It allowed parents whose children moved out of the Expansion of Interest Program (after 7th grade) into higher grades to maintain a working relationship with an organization that strives to support the programs designed for academically talented students.

One of the first requirements of an organization is to establish some governing rules that will set up the objectives and define the procedures to be used in attaining these goals. The Bylaws committee of the group worked for weeks to write a flexible, yet definitive, set of Bylaws. These Bylaws were adopted May 14, 1974, and amended May 10, 1976. A copy of those Bylaws is attached.

The objectives of the organization as defined by the Bylaws are:

1. To support the Programs for the Gifted by enriching the learning environment of academically talented students at school and at home.

2. To present parents with information, ideas, and guidance which provide for better understanding of the learning behaviors of gifted students.

3. To sponsor general programs as planned by the Association for the Gifted County Council.

4. To support and expand on projects planned by Resource Teachers for the Gifted. To help secure resource people from the community.

5. To promote an involvement and an awareness of the total school and community.

It is important to emphasize that the whole nature and purpose of the organization is that of support and promotion. We have enjoyed a good relationship with

the school administration and we feel that part of this is due to the fact that the group has not been a pressure group. Instead, we have done all that we could do to expand the program and have demonstrated that our concern is not limited to talk but that we are willing to give of our time and resources to enhance what is being provided for our children. Credit for our good relationship with the administration goes also in large part to Carlene Brown who was the first Coordinator for the program and to Sibyl Plamondon, the present Coordinator.

Our support for the Program for the Gifted in Richmond County takes several forms. Among the specific projects which are designed for direct help to the program are: (1) field trips, (2) resource services, (3) financial support, (4) transportation, (5) library materials relating to gifted children, (6) publication of a newsletter.

Among the committee chairmen whose duties are described in the Bylaws are the field trip chairmen. These are particularly important to the organization. They plan the trips-- one in town and one out-of-town trip for each grade. The trips themselves are proposed by the teachers, but the grade chairman makes arrangements with the people at the places we wish to visit, reserves the buses, calculates the cost per student, prepares the permission slips, receives the money and slips as they are turned in, keeps records on the reservations, and secures the chaperones. The teachers are asked only to distribute the permission slips, collect them as they are turned in, and turn them over to the chairman. Each child is expected to pay his own way on an out-of-town trip (for bus, insurance, and admission charges), and carry his own lunch, but no child is ever refused if he cannot pay. In such a case, the teacher would let us know the situation, our organization would pay his way and no one would ever know except those directly involved. On these out-of-town trips the organization pays the bus, insurance, and admission charges for the teachers because the teachers must accompany at least two different groups and the cost becomes significant. On in-town trips the chairman makes the arrangements with the places we plan to visit and the teacher is responsible for securing the drivers for her students. A partial listing of our field trips is as follows:

OUT-OF-TOWN	IN-TOWN
Zoo (Columbia, SC)	Municipal Building
Historic Savannah, Georgia	Computer Centers (Medical College of Georgia, Fort Gordon)
Okefenokee Swamp Park	Journey to Japan
Charleston, South Carolina	Invitation to India
Fernbank Science Center (Atlanta, GA)	Historic Augusta
Huntsville, Alabama	Opera
	Ballet
	Augusta Players
	Television station
	Coca-Cola Bottling Plant

One of the other more important ways in which we can be of service directly to the teachers is in the resources area. We have gotten responses from a wide variety of people who are willing to assist the teachers and we hope to expand this listing yearly. The chairman compiles the list according to general topics so that each teacher has a personal copy, and the original forms are on file in the coordinator's office. If a teacher needs to have some help in a particular

area of study, she has the list of people she knows are interested and willing to help.

Some of the resource people who have taken part in the program had special skills in the following areas:

Pottery
Quilling
French
Photography
Computer specialist
Travel -- foreign and in the United States
Medicine
Pulp and paper production
Dentistry
Creative dramatics

Our financial support for the program includes the underwriting of the field trips as discussed earlier as well as direct cash payments to teachers to help offset out-of-pocket expenses they incur. Teachers are allowed wide flexibility in using the money and are asked only to report to the Association how they spent the funds. Funds have been used to pay for film and developing for use in a unit on photography, to buy books and games for the program, to buy consumable supplies that are not covered by funds alloted for the program, or to buy other supplementary materials for use in the class. The sources of our funds have included an art auction, popcorn sales by the parents, and at present a co-op program of a voluntary donation of $5 per family. These funds are in addition to our dues of $1 per person per year. Operating costs are kept to an absolute minimum so that as much money as possible is put back into the program for the benefit of the children.

In the beginning of the 1975 school year, it was decided that the concept of centers for the Program for the Gifted was the most beneficial method of education. Part of this was due to the fact that some of the equipment was not easily transported and also because much of a teacher's valuable time was lost in traveling from school to school as an itinerant teacher.

This concept necessitated transportation of the children from their home school to a center school. Transportation from the school administration was not available, so the parents were organized into carpools. This method has continued, and with minor exceptions has worked extremely well. We hope that in the future the carpooling may become unnecessary if transportation from the administration becomes available, but for now this is part of our service to the program.

The organization has begun compiling printed materials about the nature of gifted children which are directed primarily toward the parents. This has been helpful for parents who are not very familiar with their role in the education of the children and who are somewhat unsure how to relate to them at home. These materials are available for parents to check out to study. A list of the publications which we have found most helpful is attached along with information about ordering them.

One of the most pressing problems in an organization such as ours is the need for disseminating information to parents and to the public in general. A

newsletter is published three times a year which contains information about activities of the organization, as well as information which is helpful to parents of gifted children. Included in the newsletters have been excerpts from the Gifted Child Quarterly, from PTA publications, from articles written by professionals in the field, as well as names and addresses of companies and manufacturers which market toys, games, puzzles, kits, and books that are geared to stimulate and teach. The newsletters are distributed to the resource teachers by the Coordinator for the program and they are then given to the students to carry home. We use this method of distribution for all our correspondence; i.e., notices of meetings, special events, permission slips for field trips, etc.

Mrs. Wendell Hofman, one of the parents in our group, compiled a list of games for the gifted which were distributed to the other parents. The introduction to this list read in part "....our children use games or game-like activities as part of their instruction. Games are a highly motivating and enjoyable tool used to teach, to reinforce, and to give practical experience in many areas of study and endeavor. The more stimulating and challenging the games, the more fun they are for the gifted child and the more learning and development results. ....However, with all the games--some are junk--on the market today, we thought a good project might be to compile a list of the best which can be used to good advantage in our homes. A good game can be useful to anyone, but the gifted will be more proficient in using it to its fullest potential at an earlier age." There followed four pages of names and descriptions of games which are particularly challenging and stimulating. At the Association meeting, many of these games were available for parents to examine. This has proved to be a worthwhile project, and parents have been appreciative of Mrs. Hofman's efforts.

Our organization was the first such group in the state of Georgia and we have tried to be of assistance to other groups as they attempted to organize. We have supplied information about our group and have shared both our successes and failures. A natural outgrowth of our efforts was the hosting of the organizational meeting of the Georgia Supporters for the Gifted, a statewide, non-profit organization designed to bring together all the voices of those concerned about the education of the gifted. The meeting was held on February 18, 1978, and the group is now well on its way to working with educators, legislators, and parents to advance the education and welfare of the gifted. A charter signed at the meeting stated "We, the undersigned, do hereby affix our signatures to this charter, certifying the founding of the Georgia Supporters for the Gifted. We commit our energies and our efforts to advance all facets of the education and welfare of the gifted in the State of Georgia, in accordance with the stated goals of our Bylaws. Witness our hands and seals this eighteenth day of February, nineteen hundred and seventy-eight in Augusta, Georgia."

The standing committees of GSG are the following: Publications and Dissemination, Finance, Legislative and Court Action, Services, Personnel Training and Research, Membership, Local Chapter Assistance, Volunteer Skills Bank, and Biannual Study. The committee which will deal most directly with the role of parents in the education of the gifted is the Local Chapter Assistance Committee. This committee has prepared packets of information which we feel would be helpful to a local group, either as it is organized or as it tries to meet the needs of its students and parents. These packets are to be made available to local groups upon request.

This, then is where we are. There is much more to be done. Our potential is limited only by our lack of vision. We can help our children to dream improbable dreams and realize otherwise impossible ambitions.

BYLAWS OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED IN RICHMOND COUNTY

Article I: Name

The name of this organization is The Association for the Gifted in Richmond County, Georgia (TAG-RC).

Article II: Objectives

Section 1. To support the Programs for the Gifted by enriching the learning environment of academically talented students at school and at home.

Section 2. To present parents with information, ideas, and guidance which provide for better understanding of the learning behaviors of gifted students.

Section 3. To sponsor general programs as planned by the Association for the Gifted County Council.

Section 4. To support and expand on projects planned by Resource Teachers for the Gifted.

To help secure resource people from the community.

Section 5. To promote an involvement and an awareness of the total school and community.

Article III: Membership and Dues

Section 1. Any person who subscribes to the objectives of this Association shall qualify for membership.

Section 2. Dues shall be one dollar annually per person.

Section 3. The fiscal year shall run from September 1 through August 31.

Article IV: TAG-RC County Council

Section 1. The County Council shall be made up of Officers, Resource Teachers, and at least one representative elected or appointed for the school year from each school having a program for the Gifted.

Section 2. Attendance to County Council meetings shall be a condition to serve as a representative.

Section 3. Each school may have an alternate who can vote during the absence of the representative.

Section 4. Representatives shall be responsible for reporting information to parents at their respective schools.

Article V: Officers and Elections

Section 1. The officers of this organization shall be a President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer, to be elected biannually.

Section 2. The Nominating Committee shall consist of five members elected at the second general Association meeting. Two shall be elected from the County Council, two nominated from the floor of the Association, and a Resource Teacher.

Section 3. The President shall designate one appointed as chairman. The Nominating Committee shall submit a slate of officers to be elected and installed at the third general Association meeting during odd numbered years.

Section 4. All officers shall be elected by a majority voting of those present at the general meeting, from the slate presented by the Nominating Committee with such additional nominees as shall be made from the floor.

Section 5. In the event any of the elected officers cannot serve the full term, the vacancy shall be filled by the Executive Committee.

Article VI: Duties of Officers and Committee Chairmen

Section 1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the County Council and at all general meetings of The Association for the Gifted and shall perform all other duties pertaining to the Office. The President shall name all committees and appoint committee chairmen necessary for the execution of the programs and shall be ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.

Section 2. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall perform the duties of that office.

Section 3. The Recording Secretary shall keep minutes and records of the meetings of the County Council and the general meetings of the Association.

Section 4. The Corresponding Secretary shall handle all correspondence, give notice of meetings, and shall compile the yearbook.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall receive all monies belonging to The Association for the Gifted.
The Treasurer shall pay only those debts approved by the officers.

Section 6. Standing Committees:

1. Community Resources
   a. This chairman shall compile a list of contacted persons (local and/or state) who would serve as resource persons to the Resource Teachers. These individuals, groups, or businesses would be willing to go into the schools themselves or supply resource material to the students and teachers.
   b. The chairman will also compile a list of contacted persons in the community who would act as sponsors to a secondary independent study student doing in indepth study of a specific topic.

2. Program
   The chairman shall help develop three programs a year directed toward educating parents as to the nature of gifted children; curriculum theories, programs, and strategies for teaching gifted children. Local administrators should be used periodically. The chairman will set up the meeting place and time.

3. Library
   The chairman will compile and organize printed material (books, brochures, magazine articles, etc.) on gifted education that can be checked out by members.

4. Field trip (One chairman for each grade level)

The chairman shall assume full rerponsibility for planning all aspects of out-of-town trips and any in-town trips that would involve all students in a specific grade.

5. Ways and Means
This chairman shall plan fund-raising projects.

6. Publicity

The chairman shall inform the public and the membership of Association activities.

7. Telephone

The chairman shall call Council members or Executive Committee members as needed.

8. Membership

The chairman shall receive membership dues and forms and compile records of current members.

Section 7. The Ececutive Committee for the Association shall be composed of all officers and chairmen of standing committees.

Article VII: Meetings

Section 1. The meetings of the County Council shall be held on the first Monday in October with additional meetings called as needed by the President. Changes in this procedure may be made by the President.

Section 2. Three general meetings each school year shall be planned by the Council and the Program Chairman, the time and place to be announced.

Article VIII: Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern the Association in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not in conflict with these bylaws.

Articles IX: Amending Bylaws

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Association by a simple majority of those present after prior notice has been sent to members or announcement has been given at the previous meeting that such amending will take place.

Date Adopted: May 14, 1974
Date Amended: May 10, 1976

The following publications are of special interest to parents of gifted children. It is very helpful for the local group to purchase copies of these publications and have them available to members of the organization.

Your Gifted Child and You by Felice Kaufman

"The purpose of this book is to help parents and teachers better identify and interpret outstanding potential in their children. It is designed to inform them of various ways they might help their child develop his/her potential and to present strategies they might use to assist the schools in providing for this process. The intent is not to deliver to parents the ultimate formula for raising a gifted child. Rather, it is to offer suggestions....."

ORDER FROM: The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, Va. 22091
Publication # 143 Cost: $4.25

Testing the Gifted Child: An Interpretation in Lay Language
by Richard O. Fortna and Bruce O. Boston

"Parents and educators of gifted students, regardless of their feelings and opinions about 'testing' continue to be faced with the reality that standardized tests are used for identification and will continue to be so used for the foreseeable future. Given this fact, we feel that some basic information needs to be communicated about several of these instruments commonly used as identification and screening measures in gifted and talented programming. Because parents, teachers, school administrators, and educators of the gifted very often lack the expertise to comprehend fully what such tests are and how they function, we have provided descriptions, written in less technical language, of the tests which are used for this purpose.

ORDER FROM: The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, Va. 22091
Publication # 142 Cost: $3.50

How to Help Your Gifted Child by Gina Ginsberg and Charles H. Harrison

"The Gifted Child Society, Inc. is one of the country's largest non-profit, parent-run organizations and offers an extensive, nationally respected "Saturday Workshop" for gifted and talented children. The Ford Foundation funded the society to write, specifically for parents and teachers, this much needed book on the joys and problems surrounding gifted children."
ORDER FROM: Monarch Press/ a division of Simon & Schuster, Inc.
1 West 39th Street
New York, N. Y. 10018
Publication (#18759) Cost: $3.95

Parentspeak on Gifted and Talented Children by Kay Coffey, Gina Ginsberg, Carrol Lockhart, Carol Nathan, DeLois McCartney, and Keith Wood

"Written by six parents residing from the East to the West Coast, to cover reasons for special attention for gifted and talented children, ways to organize parents' groups, practical hints for home life, experiences in a "reluctant" community, and commitment to the cause of gifted education. Forms, organizational structure of parents; groups, suggested enrichment courses, and many resource suggestions are part of an extensive Appendix. The Foreword is a composite letter to parents written by gifted high school students."

ORDER FROM: Ventura County Superintendent of Schools
County Office Building
Ventura, Ca. 93001
Attn. LTI Publications
Publication #9 Cost: $2.25

A Handbook for Parents of Gifted and Talented by Jeanne L. Delp and Ruth A. Martinson

"Covers identification, cause of neglect of gifted and talented children, ways to help their parents organize, and other related topics. Chapter titles include "The Parents Speak" and "Typical Questions and Brief Answers." There are eight pages of resource lists.

ORDER FROM: Ventura County Superintendent of Schools
County Office Building
Ventura, Ca. 93001
Attn. LTI Publications
Publication # 6 Cost: $3.45

Information Packets for Parents of Gifted and/or Talented Children Available from the Gifted Child Society, Inc. (See enclosed information sheet)

Nearly...Everything You've Always wanted to Know About the Gifted and Talented Published by the Wisconsin Council for the Gifted and Talented. Write directly to them for ordering information:

Wisconsin Council for Gifted and Talented
6833 West Wells
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

GIFTED CHILD SOCIETY, INC.
59 Glen Gray Road
Oakland, New Jersey 07436

Our original Parent Information Packet was distributed to participants in our October 1976 conference for parents of gifted and/or talented children. It has been updated and improved with the help of a federal grant (P.L. 93-380, Section 404) which we received under the sponsorship of the Northern Highlands Regional Board of Education in Allendale, New Jersey.

Revised contents:

1. Introductory Letter
2. Fact Sheet for Parents of Gifted and/or Talented Children
3. Helpful Hints for Parents of Gifted and/or Talented Children
4. Checklist: Is Your Child Gifted?
5. What the Gifted Child Needs from Parents
6. Parent Checklist for Youngsters Interested in Science
7. "HOW TO BE A GIFTED PARENT"
8. Discussion Topics for Parents of Gifted and/or Talented Children
9. Plan for forming Parent Group
10. Parent Checklist for Organizing Educational Programs
11. Bill of Rights for Gifted Students
12. Community Resource Survey with Covering Letter
13. Information on free Material about a five part Radio Series
14. Information on Gifted and Talented Education in New Jersey's "T&E" School Code
15. Suggestions on HOW TO WORK WITH BOARDS OF EDUCATION
16. Federal History on Gifted and Talented Education
17. Policy Statement of the U.S. Office of Education on Gifted and Talented Education
18. Reprint of "HOW TO MOVE CONGRESS"
19. Members of 95th Congress
20. "We've Come A Long Way, Baby....."
21. Brochure for the Saturday Workshop
22. Newsletter of Gifted Child Society
23. Form for Membership in Gifted Child Society
24. Order form for "HOW TO HELP YOUR GIFTED CHILD"
25. Material from N/S Leadership Training Institute on Gifted and Talented
26. Information on printed Resources from The Council for Exceptional Children
27. Order Form for Additional Parent Information Packets
28. Order Form for Information Packet for Educators

ORDER BLANK

Please send me _____ Information Packets for Parents of Gifted and/or Talented Children.

The cost per package is $5.00 each, plus $1.00 for mailing and postage.

My check in the mount of $_____ is enclosed. Please send the packet(s) to:

NAME: _____

STREET: _____

TOWN, STATE & ZIP CODE: _____

Spring 1977